

Washington, DC – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) made the following statement upon the news that Langley Air Force Base (LAFB) will receive additional F-22s to its two squadrons, resulting in six additional jets and over 100 additional jobs at the base. A decision by the Air Force on how to re-align the total F-22 Raptor force was announced today.

“This is a great boost for Langley Air Force Base, and a sound decision by the Air Force to utilize existing assets,” Wittman said. “Langley has ready, capable facilities to house the additional aircraft in their squadrons without putting a substantial burden on the taxpayer. I’m pleased to see the base gain over 100 new personnel, boosting jobs in our region. This announcement will result in an increase of three jets per squadron, bringing the total number of jets per squadron up from 18 to 21 combat-ready Raptors.

LAFB currently houses two combat coded regular Air Force F-22 squadrons. Today’s announcement by the Air Force is the result of an evaluation of the home basing plan for the F-22 Raptor fighter aircraft based on the 2009 decision to limit total aircraft production from 381 to 187. Following last year’s decision to curtail acquisition at 187 F-22s, there were growing inefficiencies from spreading the Raptors too thin, based on the initial basing plan for 381 jets. As a result, the Air Force initiated a study to determine how best to consolidate the total F-22 force from four to three locations. Bases were assessed for their potential to accept or donate aircraft because of the limited production of the Raptor to balance the force.

Three operational F-22 squadrons were originally slated for LAFB, and approximately \$95 million was appropriated to construct three hangars specially designed for them. Due to reductions, only two of Langley’s new hangars currently house F-22 aircraft. The third will be vacated this September when an F-15 squadron is retired. Langley’s operational capacity and modern infrastructure would enable operations with additional F-22’s to commence immediately.

Congressman Wittman has worked closely with the Air Force on this issue for over two years, and has spoken to Air Force Secretary Michael Donley on a number of occasions regarding LAFB and its positive attributes for potential growth opportunities. The Hampton Roads Congressional delegation, including Senators Webb and Warner, has sent two separate letters to the Secretary in the last year, [with the most recent letter sent in support of LAFB last week](#) .

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.